

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the American people, I want to express to the Danish people and the Danish government—and particularly to the families of those Danes who have made the ultimate sacrifice—our deepest gratitude for their assistance in the struggle in Iraq. Denmark has suffered both military and civilian deaths and casualties in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Moller has played a critical role in Denmark's support of our efforts against terrorism since he became Denmark's Foreign Minister in 2001. In addition, he has demonstrated remarkable foreign policy leadership during the Danish Presidency of the European Union in 2002. Under Denmark's leadership of the EU, the historic expansion of the European Union was agreed upon. Under Dr. Moller's leadership Denmark has affirmed its commitment to the war on terrorism and he has been dedicated to seeking a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Dr. Moller was born in Denmark in 1942. He received his MA in literature from the University of Copenhagen. In 1973, he received his PhD, and he is a highly respected intellectual. For many years he has been a widely read commentator in leading daily papers. For many years he was a member of the senior management of National Danish Radio, and he later became Chairman of the "Radio Council," the Executive Program Board of National Danish Radio.

Born into politics, Dr. Moller followed in the footsteps of both his father and mother, who were leading conservative politicians. He became a member of the Danish Parliament in 1984, and since that time, he has been a leading spokesman for his party, particularly on foreign affairs and human rights issues. For more than a decade, he was a member of the Council of Europe. In 1997, he became the chairman of his party. Previous to his appointment as Foreign Minister, he served as Minister of Environment, where carried out extensive environmental reforms.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Moller is the author of numerous books on a variety of themes—from the history of the Baltic Countries to environmental problems and the values of an "open society." His book about Danish pastor Kaj Munk, who was a leading opponent of the German occupation of Denmark during World War II, became a national bestseller when it was published in 2000.

The political and intellectual efforts of Dr. Moller have been recognized in numerous honors and awards that he has received. In 1997 he was elected "Politician of the Year" in Denmark. He has received a series of prestigious Danish awards, including the "Georg Brandes Prisen" and "Kaj Munk Prisen." Internationally, he has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Raoul Wallenberg Medal.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I do not mention another facet of Denmark's efforts to improve relations with the United States—an effort in which the Danish Foreign Ministry has played an important role. Each year for the past several years, the Humanity in Action program has brought Danish students to the United States to serve as fellows in offices and committees of the United States House of Representatives, and a similar number of American students have gone to Denmark to learn first-hand about the Danish political system. Thus far, some 60 students have participated in this program. This exchange is an im-

portant element in strengthening the bonds of understanding between Danes and Americans of the next generation of political leaders.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Friends of Denmark are hosting Foreign Minister Moller for his visit to Capitol Hill today. This Congressional member organization was established in 1999 to foster stronger relations with the government and people of Denmark. The Friends of Denmark include many members of this body who are of Danish heritage, who have Danish constituents, who seek to strengthen ties between our two countries and/or who admire the contributions of the Danish people and their government to international peace and security and respect for human rights. Mr. Speaker, urge my colleagues to join me today in welcoming and honouring Danish Foreign Minister Dr. Per Stig Moller on his visit to the United States Congress.

COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, today we commemorate the 89th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, a painful chapter in world history when the international community stood silent as Armenian villages were purged and systematically destroyed.

Between the years of 1915 and 1923, close to one and half million Armenians were killed while hundreds of thousands of others were mercilessly deported, exiled, and uprooted from their homes. Although the atrocities were documented by the United States and others, the information was never acted upon. Sadly, even today, the issue remains buried.

After 89 years, the victims and their descendants deserve better. No longer should their suffering go unnoticed or unmourned. Recognition of the Armenian Genocide is long overdue. It is time for the United States to make a concerted effort to overcome the historical denial that genocide took place, and put an end to the harmful isolation of Armenia that tragically continues.

We must identify ways to facilitate the lifting of the blockade against Armenia and encourage a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabagh. We must help Armenia continue to flourish as a burgeoning democracy, extend Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) status to strengthen her economy, and stand ready to help maintain her military strength.

Let us resolve ourselves to ensure that the coming year will be one that brings full recognition of the genocide that took place, and peace to the region and the memory of those who perished.

56TH ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise today to recognize and honor the

56th Anniversary of Israel's Independence Day. With the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Jewish independence was restored.

I commend the Israeli people for their remarkable achievements in building a new state and a pluralistic and democratic society in the Middle East in the face of terrorism and hostility. On this occasion, I extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to the state of Israel and her people for a peaceful, prosperous, and successful future.

Independence Day is a celebration of the renewal of the Jewish state in the Land of Israel, the birthplace of the Jewish people. In this land, the Jewish people began to develop its distinctive religion and culture some 4,000 years ago, and here it has preserved an unbroken physical presence, for centuries as a sovereign state, at other times under foreign control.

On this 56th Anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel, we recognize that the Israeli people have created one of the leading nations in the fields of science, technology, medicine, and agriculture. The people of Israel have established a vibrant and functioning pluralistic and democratic political system that guarantees the freedoms of speech and press, and free, fair, and open elections with respect for the rule of law. With a strong democracy in a troubled part of the world, Israel has absorbed millions of new immigrants from all over the world. Some of these immigrants arrived without a single possession, but Israel welcomed them by providing housing, education, social security, and health care.

I rise also to condemn the rising tide of anti-Semitism around the globe and to demonstrate the United States' lasting bond of friendship and cooperation with Israel, which has existed for the past 56 years.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing and paying tribute to the state of Israel as she celebrates her 56th Independence Day and again extend my warmest wishes for a peaceful and prosperous future.

ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of the 4th Congressional District to express my heartfelt congratulations on the 56th anniversary of Israel's Independence Day. Today we celebrate the rebirth of the Jewish State. On this land, thousands of years ago, the Jewish people developed their culture and continue to cultivate it today.

The ideals, which Israelis live with, and for, were enshrined in their declaration of independence and represented by David Ben-Gurion, a leader in the struggle to establish the State of Israel, and the first Prime Minister. He presided over national projects, in order to rapidly develop the country, none more important than the airlift of Jews from other countries. There are over 6.7 million people, over 5.5 million of them Jewish, currently living in Israel.

Faced with constant fear and terror I commend the Israelis for creating and maintaining a viable democracy, founded on liberty, justice, and peace. They have overcome and accomplished so much in a short amount of time. Lasting peace between Israel and its neighbors remains the ultimate goal and peace has been achieved in certain regions. Together, we can make realize the ultimate goal of peace with all of Israel's neighbors and share legitimate security and success.

Mazel Tov!

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING SHERIFF
JOHN HEMEYER

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that my good friend John Hemeyer will retire as Sheriff of Cole County, Missouri. He has held the office since 1986.

Sheriff Hemeyer has had a long and respected career in law enforcement. On the job, he is respected as a co-worker and boss. He has shown concern and a willingness to help those with whom he serves. He has personally touched the lives of countless Cole County residents. He has been described as always willing to enter any situation first, which is an admirable trait for those who serve the community as first responders.

For almost two decades, Sheriff Hemeyer has been willing to let those he serves, the people of Cole County, make the decision as to whether or not he would return as sheriff, and the voters have asked him to stay every time. This year, he has decided to take a well-deserved retirement. His decision to not seek another term was met with sadness and an outpouring of appreciation for his years of dedicated service and a job well done.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Members of the House will join me in honoring Sheriff Hemeyer for his years of service and in wishing him all the best in the days ahead.

CONGRATULATING WILLIAM F.
ALDINGER

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my congratulations to a business leader from the 10th Congressional District of Illinois, Mr. William F. Aldinger, CEO of Household International—and now HSBC North America—on his recognition by the Friends of Adam Smith (FOAS) for the 2004 Business Citizen medal tonight.

I have had the pleasure to get to know Bill over the past several years and I am thrilled the FOAS has recognized his leadership in community service, involvement and public policy. By visiting their headquarters in Prospect Heights, Illinois, to learn how they serve over 50 million customers, I have seen how Household has helped empower its employees to play a more active role in politics and good government by conducting internal voter registration drives.

With almost 6,000 employees in Illinois—and 50,000 throughout the United States—I have seen first hand how Household-HSBC is active in their community under Bill's leadership. Whether with Junior Achievement, the American Cancer Society, Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago, Habitat for Humanity and many more, Household-HSBC employees are constantly working to make their communities better places to live. Finally, I believe the Business Citizen medal is not just an award for Bill Aldinger, but all his employees. Congratulations Bill, and all members of the Household-HSBC North America team, and keep up the great work.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solemn memorial to the estimated 1.5 million men, women, and children who lost their lives during the Armenian Genocide. As in the past, I am pleased to join so many distinguished House colleagues on both sides of the aisle in ensuring that the horrors wrought upon the Armenian people are never repeated.

On April 24, 1915, over 200 religious, political, and intellectual leaders of the Armenian community were brutally executed by the Turkish government in Istanbul. Over the course of the next 8 years, this war of ethnic genocide against the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire took the lives of over half the world's Armenian population.

Sadly, there are some people who still deny the very existence of this period which saw the institutionalized slaughter of the Armenian people and dismantling of Armenian culture. To those who would question these events, I point to the numerous reports contained in the U.S. National Archives detailing the process that systematically decimated the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire. However, old records are too easily forgotten—and dismissed. That is why we come together every year at this time: to remember in words what some may wish to file away in archives. This genocide did take place, and these lives were taken. That memory must keep us forever vigilant in our efforts to prevent these atrocities from ever happening again.

I am proud to note that Armenian immigrants found, in the United States, a country where their culture could take root and thrive. Most Armenians in America are children or grandchildren of the survivors, although there are still survivors among us. In my district in Northwest Indiana, a vibrant Armenian-American community has developed and strong ties to Armenia continue to flourish. My predecessor in the House, the late Adam Benjamin, was of Armenian heritage, and his distinguished service in the House serves as an example to the entire Northwest Indiana community. Over the years, members of the Armenian-American community throughout the United States have contributed millions of dollars and countless hours of their time to various Armenian causes. Of particular note are Mrs. Vicki Hovanessian and her husband, Dr. Raffi Hovanessian, residents of Indiana's First

Congressional District, who have continually worked to improve the quality of life in Armenia, as well as in Northwest Indiana. Three other Armenian-American families in my congressional district, Dr. Aram and Mrs. Seta Semerdjian, Dr. Heratch and Mrs. Sonya Doumanian, and Dr. Ara and Mrs. Rosy Yeretsian, have also contributed greatly toward charitable works in the United States and Armenia. Their efforts, together with hundreds of other members of the Armenian-American community, have helped to finance several important projects in Armenia, including the construction of new schools, a mammography clinic, and a crucial roadway connecting Armenia to Nagorno Karabagh.

In the House, I have tried to assist the efforts of my Armenian-American constituency by continually supporting foreign aid to Armenia. This past year, with my support, Armenia received \$84 million in U.S. aid to assist economic and military development. In addition, on April 16, 2004, I joined several of my colleagues in signing the letter to President Bush urging him to honor his pledge to recognize the Armenian Genocide.

The Armenian people have a long and proud history. In the fourth century, they became the first nation to embrace Christianity. During World War I, the Ottoman Empire was ruled by an organization known as the Young Turk Committee, which allied with Germany. Amid fighting in the Ottoman Empire's eastern Anatolian provinces, the historic heartland of the Christian Armenians, Ottoman authorities ordered the deportation and execution of all Armenians in the region. By the end of 1923, virtually the entire Armenian population of Anatolia and western Armenia had either been killed or deported.

While it is important to keep the lessons of history in mind, we must also remain committed to protecting Armenia from new and more hostile aggressors. In the last decade, thousands of lives have been lost and more than a million people displaced in the struggle between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabagh. Even now, as we rise to commemorate the accomplishments of the Armenian people and mourn the tragedies they have suffered, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and other countries continue to engage in a debilitating blockade of this free nation.

Consistently, I have testified before the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee on the important issue of bringing peace to a troubled area of the world. I continued my support for maintaining the level of funding for the Southern Caucasus region of the Independent States (IS), and of Armenia in particular. In addition, on February 26, 2004, I joined several of my colleagues in sending a letter to President Bush urging him to ensure parity in military assistance between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues, Representatives JOE KNOLLENBERG and FRANK PALLONE, for organizing this special order to commemorate the 89th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Their efforts will not only help bring needed attention to this tragic period in world history, but also serve to remind us of our duty to protect basic human rights and freedoms around the world.